

III.B.2.N.?. JAMESIA AMERICANA ROCK OUTCROP SHRUBLAND ALLIANCE

Waxflower Rock Outcrop Shrubland Alliance

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Waxflower Rock Outcrop Shrubland

ELEMENT CONCEPT

GLOBAL SUMMARY: Not applicable

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

USFWS Wetland System: Upland

Florissant Fossil Beds NM Environment: This rock outcrop shrubland occupies nearly every outcrop, regardless of size. Many of these sites are small, but the best examples grow from very large cliff faces on the upper shoulders of large hills. The slopes are steep (30–60%) and a few appear vertical. The aspect is predominantly southerly, but a few western exposures occur (150°–270°). The exposures are large Pikes Peak granite boulders that have sometimes weathered and cracked. The common shrubs grow within the cracks on the rocks and around the base of the rocks where accumulations of small gravel and soil occur.

Global Environment: Not applicable

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Florissant Fossil Beds NM Vegetation: This shrubland is relatively sparse because of the large boulders that are strewn on the landscape or appear as outcropping bedrock. Often, the lichens covering these rocks provide large amounts of foliar cover, at times from 30–60%. Typically, the dominant shrubs are from 1–2 m in height and provide foliar cover from approximately 10–25% across the rock outcrops. *Jamesia americana*, *Rubus deliciosus*, and *Ribes cereum* shrubs are always present, and lesser amounts of *Prunus virginiana*, *Cercocarpus montanus*, and *Dasiphora fruticosa* are sometimes observed. Common graminoids associated with these dry exposures include *Muhlenbergia montana* and *Bouteloua gracilis*, which provide foliar cover from 5–10% on most outcrops. Because the rock outcrops shed water and direct runoff to small drainages and protected sites, it is not unusual to have some more mesic graminoid species present, including *Deschampsia caespitosa*, *Bromus inermis*, and *Poa pratensis*. A few moist, protected sites support ferns, e.g., *Woodsia* spp. and *Dryopteris filix-mas*. Forbs rarely contribute more than 1–2% foliar cover on the rock outcrop formations and a variety are present. Non-vegetative cover within rock outcrops is typically that of boulders, small rock, and bare soil, which approach 55–95% ground cover values. *Jamesia americana* shrubs often grow at the base of some boulders and drape around the sides much like a curtain, resulting in only a minor foliar cover value for the shrub.

Rock outcrops are readily observable as light or white spots on the aerial photography, both true color and CIR, because of reflectance. Many of the outcrops are small, not much more than one to several boulders, and under the minimum mapping unit (0.5 ha).

Global Vegetation: Not applicable

Global Dynamics: Not applicable

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM

Stratum

Shrub

Graminoid

Forb

Species

Jamesia americana, *Rubus deliciosus*, *Ribes cereum*

Muhlenbergia montana, *Bouteloua gracilis*

Argentina anserine

Global

Stratum

Species

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM

Stratum

Species

Shrub

Jamesia americana, *Rubus deliciosus*, *Ribes cereum*, *Prunus virginiana*,
Cercocarpus montanus

Graminoid

Muhlenbergia montana, *Bouteloua gracilis*, *Festuca arizonica*

Forb

Argentina anserina, *Phacelia heterophylla*

Global

Stratum

Species

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM

Stratum

Species

Global

Stratum

Species

GLOBAL SIMILAR ASSOCIATIONS:

GLOBAL STATUS AND CLASSIFICATION COMMENTS

Global Conservation Status Rank: G?.

Global Classification Comments:

ELEMENT DISTRIBUTION

Florissant Fossil Beds NM Range: *Jamesia americana* Rock Outcrop Shrubland occupies Pikes Peak granite boulder fields exposed on south- and west-facing slopes of large hills. The most prominent of these occur on the hill north of the Hornbek Homestead and the hill east of the visitors center. The recorded elevation range for the type was approximately 8300-8750 feet on very steep, rapidly drained slopes (30–60%).

Global Range: Not applicable

Nations: US

States/Provinces: CO

ELEMENT SOURCES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM Inventory Notes: Plots 33, 43, 91

Classification Confidence: 3 **Identifier:** To be determined

REFERENCES: